

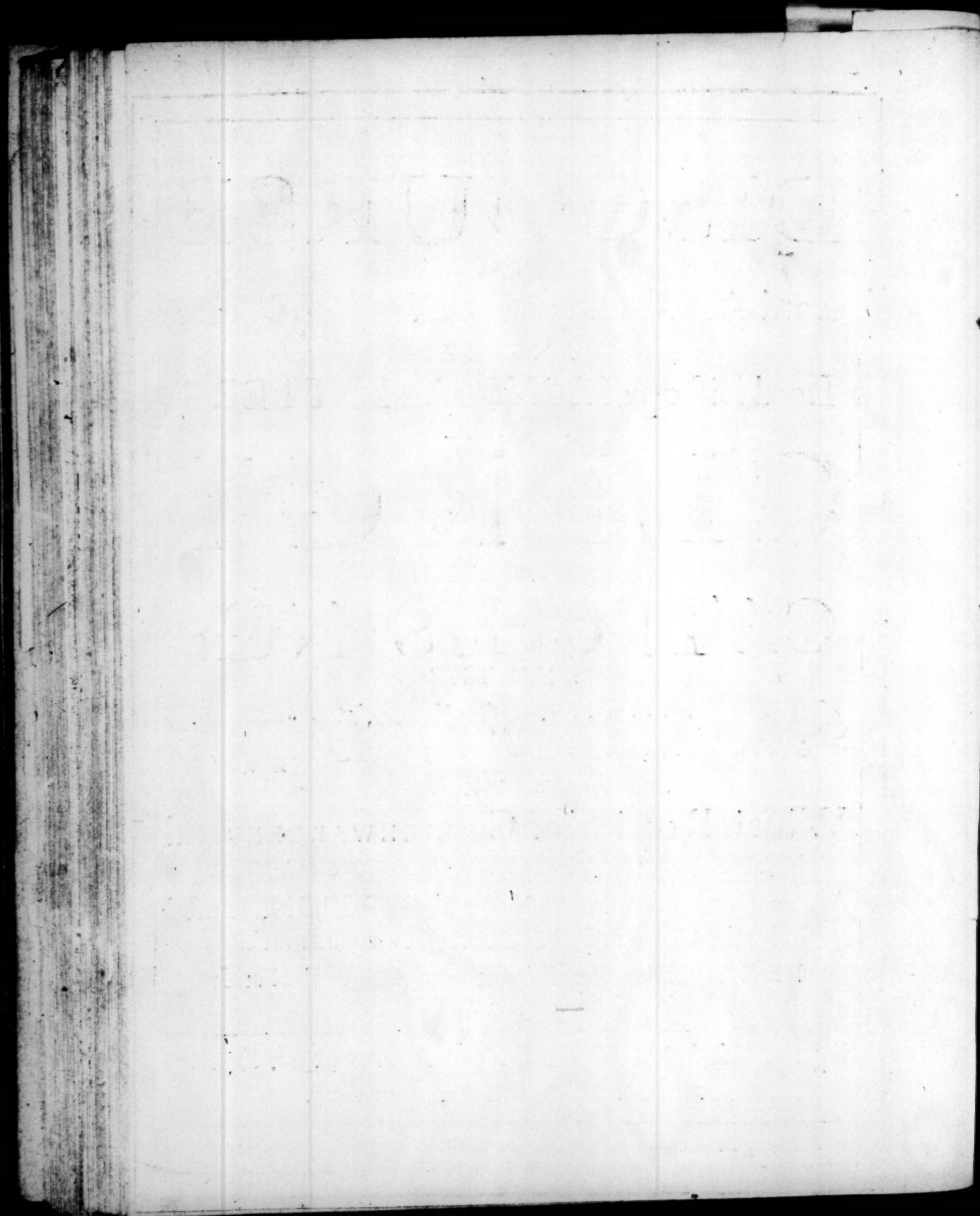
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A
DISCOURSE
ON MY
Lord Arch-Bishop of *CANTERBURY*'s
AND MY
Lord Bishop of *LONDON*'s LETTERS
TO THE
CLERGY
TOUCHING
CATECHISING,
AND THE
Sacrament of the Supper;

WITH
What is Required of CHURCHWARDENS and
MINISTERS in Reference to Obstinate *RECUSANTS*.
Also a Defence of EXCOMMUNICATION, as used
by the Church of *ENGLAND* against such.
PREACHED *March* the 9th and 16th in the Parish
Church of *St. Swithins*.

By *WILLIAM BASSET*, Rector of *St. Swithin*,
and *St. Mary Bothaw*, London.

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1 Epist. Pet. 2. 13.

Submit your selves to every Ordinance of man for the Lord's sake, whether it be to the King as Supreme.



TIME was, when this, and all other Scriptures, which teach us our Duties to Superiors in Church, and State, have been treated as *Malignants*; being miserably rack'd, and tortur'd; to make 'em speak the Language of a *Common-wealth*. And that Reformation so much talk'd of, ought to have begun with the Reformation of this, and divers other Texts, which stand so stubborn, and irreconcilable Enemies, to all opposition of Kings, and Monarchical Governments. I have met with them, who have dealt with this very Scripture, as some would perswade the Devil doth with the Bodies of Witches, molding 'em to the forms of Beasts, that in terrible Appearances, they may infatuate, and destroy.

There is one in his Appeal to *Fairfax*, and his Army, looking on this place as a Spy, that came to discover the nakedness of his Pamphlet; deals with it, as *Hanun* did with *David's* Ambassadors; *shave its beard, and cut its clothes to its buttocks*, then send it away with Shame, and Ignominy. He flies to the Greek *πᾶσι ἀνθρώποις κτίσιν*, which literally rendered is, to every Humane Creature; and because it follows, *whether to the King*; he concludes that the King is an Humane Creature, that is, as he explains it, *a Creature of the People*, who
 B have

have Power over the work of their own hands, and may unmake him at pleasure; by stripping him of that Regal Authority, and Power, which they gave him. Much like his gloss on *Rom. 13. 1. Let every soul be subject to the higher Powers*, i. e. saith he, to the *Lower House*, viz. the *Commons*; who are the Fountain and Original of all Power, whence that of Kings, and Nobles do spring; and, *Non dat, quod non habet*, it cannot give more than it hath it self, and what it doth give, it may recal again. Principles fit to debauch the most wretched Libels; and suited to the mouths of none, but a *Scotch Cargelyte*: and so meet to be spoke in no place, as at Scaffolds, and Gibbets, where they come to receive a just Recompence for such confounding, and destructive Tenents.

But it is a common rule in expounding Scripture, that that cannot be the meaning of one Text, which is contradictory to another: But this sense is contradictory, not only to many Particulars; but to the concurrent Doctrine, and Practice of Christ, his Apostles, and all Apostolick Men. Nor can that be a due, and regular Deduction from a Text, which directly contradicts the very scope, and design of the place, it is deduced from: but such is the case before us; For it is the very business, and design of this, and the following Verses, to ingage our Submission to *Every Ordinance of man*; whether to the King, as *Supreme*; or to them, that are sent by him: Therefore to conclude from hence, that Kings may be resisted, and deposed; makes the same Scripture to contradict it self, viz. That we must submit, and yet may resist 'em: obey, and yet depose 'em.

Therefore we must seek for some more Natural, and honest Explication: *ἡσυχία*, that is, *τάξις, ἡ πολιτεία*, to Order, and Government; or to that disposition of Civil Government, which is in every Nation; including all the particular Ordinances, Statutes, and Constitutions of a Society. And it is called an Humane Creature; *Quod ab hominibus ordinetur, & constituitur*; because it is ordain'd, or appointed by Men: but yet

yet not without a Divine Sanction, in that God himself Commands us to be subject to it.

Now *Monarchy* is the first, and most Noble Government in the World ; being founded originally in Families ; the first of all Societies. For *Monarch*, as the word imports, is the sole Governor in a Society : and therefore is agreeable to a *Paterfamilias*, a *King*, and an *Emperor*, who have in themselves the same Power over their Subjects ; so far as they are not limited by a Superior Power, as the *Paterfamilias* by a King, and Kings by an Emperor ; which limitation so far as it reaches, destroys the Notion of *Monarch* in the lesser, and transfers it to the greater. Where there is only one Family, or if many, so far as one is independent, so far the *Paterfamilias*, the Father, or Head of it, is a Monarch. Where there is a collection of several Families into one Body, the chief is a *Monarch* still, but yet differenced from a *Paterfamilias* by the Title of *King*. And where several Kingdoms are United, and Subject to one Head ; that Head hath the Title of *Monarch* in common with the other ; but is distinguished from both by the Title of *Emperor*. Whence it is said of Nimrod, Gen. 10. 10. that the *beginning of his Kingdom was Babel, and Enech, and Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar* : implying that the Families of those places being United under him, made up a Kingdom ; and gave him the Title, and Dignity of a King. And at the Confusion of *Babel*, when the World was divided into many Bodies, according to the number of Tongues, and Languages ; every Captain was really a King, or sole Ruler of that Body. Whence we read Gen. 14. 9. of Nine Kings joyned together in one Battel. The degeneracy of which Government into *Aristocracy*, and base *Democracy*, was a Creature, not existent from the beginning, but arose, like the Mule, from the Unnatural conjunction of an Horse, and an Ass : and scarce ever obtain'd in any place, but by a Rebellion. Therefore it was, perhaps, from the Nature of the Government, as well as that it was at this time the Govern-

ment of the World ; that *St. Peter* proceeds from Government it self, viz. the *Ordinance of man*, to the Form, and *Modus* of it, which is Monarchical, to *the King as Supreme*—Had some Men as much to Plead for *Commonwealth, Free State, or Parliament*, they would long since have boasted the *jus Divinum* of 'em.

2. Having found the meaning of this *Ordinance of man* ; we shall observe the Command to submit to it ; for it is spoke Imperatively *ὑποτάγητε, Be ye subject* : But we have no Precept, or Example to the contrary ; and therefore must yield either Active, or Passive Obedience. Which is agreeable to the Doctrine, and Practice of our Blessed Saviour ; who paid Tribute, rather than make a Disturbance : He submitted to the High Priest, and Jewish *Synedrion* ; to an Heathen *Pilat*, and the most unjust, and unreasonable Sentence. This was not only taught by *St. Peter*, and *St. Paul*, under *Nero*, the Monster of Mankind ; but was sealed by their Blood under the same Emperor. To this did the Fathers, and Primitive Churches all agree ; whose steps the Church of *England* follows both in Doctrine, and Practice. This is so great, and evident a part of Christian Religion, that it was as Catholick as the Church it self, till first Popery, and from thence Presbytery, began to appear, and disturb the World.

This is imply'd in the very Nature, and Reason of Society ; which is an Union, or imbodying of particulars for mutual preservation. For this very Union is it self a tacit, and mutual Compact to be governed by the Laws, and Rules of that Society. The making, and execution of which, must be intrusted into a few hands ; and in case any thing shall be ordain'd, or imposed, that is unlawful in it self, or destructive of the first ends of Society ; there is no Remedy, but either Patience, or a quiet remove into some other Society, where those Evils cannot reach 'em ; even as the Members of a Family, as Children, Servants, or others ; must conform to the Rules of that Family, or remove. Whence the same

word.

word [Honor] doth import the Duties, we owe both to Civil Magistrates, and Natural Parents. Thus our Saviour ordered the Disciples, that when they were Persecuted in one City, they should fly to another; and not look there to complain of Grievances, to make Parties, and Plots upon the Government, endeavoring to secure the best things, *viz.* Religion, and Property, by the worst Methods, *viz.* Rebellion, and Blood.

Nor is there any other Doctrine, that gives either Magistrates, or People, any security of their Religion, Estates, or Lives. For leave but any hole for refusals, resistance, or self-defence, as some call it, to creep in at; and you give but an opportunity to every State-Mountebank, and Knavish Politician, to put tricks upon the People, in perswading 'em to a necessity of slighting, or resisting the Laws, either for the removal, or prevention of those Evils, which are supposed to licence such refusals, or resistance. By which means all Government would be set upon hinges; and Men would quickly do only what they have a mind to do: and a Society would be more dangerous, than many wild, and ungoverned Parts of the World. Inquire of this, and the Nations about us; Examine the Times, that are past; and you will find, that this Doctrine of resistance hath made more Differences, Wars, and Bloodshed; than all the Controversies among Princes, in the like space of time, have done. What Calamities, and Devastations, may we then imagine there would have been, and would yet be, had Men liberty upon any account whatever, to slight, and resist the Government? Therefore the God of Peace, Unity, and Order, hath given us such Rules, and Precepts of Universal Obedience, that there is no room left for any reasonable Plea to the contrary.

We must therefore submit either Actively, or Passively:

1. Actively, by doing the thing commanded, where it is not contrary to any Law, or Ordinance of God. For God bids us submit to *every Ordinance*, without exception; and there-

therefore to every thing, which himself hath not forbidden. And if any Plead a Prohibition, it must not be from illogical Inferences, sound of Words, and misapplication of Phrases; but from a Rule as plain, and satisfactory, as the Command. And if this be produced, yet it can licence,

2. Only to a Passive Submission, in suffering the Penalty of Non-obedience.

Now we have here a Precept directed to us from my Lord Arch-Bishop of *Canterbury*, as one of our Parishes is under this Jurisdiction: and another from my Lord Bishop of *London*; as the other Parish is a Member of his Lordship's Diocese. Which Orders even this very Text doth oblige us to observe, and do; unless you can find any Evil in the things commanded; in which case you are quietly to submit to those Penalties, with which the Law shall punish your Refusals, or Neglects. For your Information, and Satisfaction in so important concerns; I shall observe in these Letters, these three things,

1. What is required of you,
2. What of the Churchwardens, and
3. What of me.

It is required of you,

1. That you frequent the Prayers of the Church.
2. That you send your Children, and Servants to be Catechized. And,
3. That you receive the Sacrament of the Supper.

The First of these I intend to discourse on another Subject: And therefore begin,

1. With *Catechising*: where we have,
 1. The thing in Command, which is *Catechising*.
 2. The Parties who, *Children*, and *Servants*; and
 3. The Persons, that must Prepare, and send 'em, and they are *Parents*, *Masters*, and *Mistresses*.
1. It is required that we *Catechise*,

A thing, as some think, founded on that of *St. Paul to Tim.* 2 *Ep.* 1. 13. *Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me.* Which *κατάλογος*, or Exemplar, some have taken to be a System, or short Catechetical Discourse on the fundamental Points of Religion. However it is certain, it was a thing very early, and Universally Practised in the Christian Church. And *Origen*, with other Learned Men, condescended to this work. There was an Order of Professors called the *κατηχηματικοί*, or *Catechumens*, who were the Persons, that learned these Catechises. Indeed we sometimes find in the Fathers, and Church-Historians; that these *Catechumens* are described to be *Christians by Profession*, but not yet *Baptiz'd*. Which sort were either Children of Heathen, who were not received into the Church by Baptism, till instructed in the Christian Religion: which is the Practice of our Church in the case of *Jews, Mahometans, &c.* and is agreeable to our Saviour's rule, *Mat.* 28. 19. that all Nations, being then *Gentile*, must be taught, or discipled, before Baptism: Or else the Children of those Christians, who were newly converted themselves, and defer'd Baptism, till *Easter*, or *Whitsontide*, which, in some times, and places, were the stated Seasons of Baptism: Or of such, who delayed it, till the time of Death, as many did out of a conceit, that Sins after Baptism are unpardonable. But the Children even of Christians, whether Baptized, or not, were obliged to this exercise. And the Sons of *Constantine* the Emperor were put out to Masters, and Tutors, to be train'd up in the Principles of Christian Religion. Whence it appears,

2. That the Persons to be Catechised were Neophytes, or young Professors; which among us are *Children*, or *younger Servants*, as my Lord of *Canterbury* expresses it; or *Children*, and *Apprentices*, as my Lord of *London* words it. Or Persons, whose Age, and Condition, may suppose 'em little acquainted with the Doctrine of the Gospel: and the less they are so, still the more need of this instruction. Catechism is in order
to

to Baptism in the Children of Infidels, who are yet unbaptiz'd : but it is in order to Confirmation, and the Sacrament of the Supper in the Children of Christians, who are baptiz'd already, therefore *quære*, whether not only those under Sixteen; but Persons of all Ages whatever, that have not received Confirmation, and the Sacrament, may not in strictness be required to this Exercise? The *Rubrick* obliges all *Children, Servants, and Apprentices*, who have not yet learn'd the *Catechism*; without determining the Age: but because the Law obliges those above Sixteen to receive the Sacrament, therefore it is presum'd these *Servants* are under Sixteen: and accordingly our Orders command those above to the Sacrament; and consequently those called to be Catechised must be presumed under that term.

3. The Persons required to prepare, and send 'em, are *Parents, Masters, or Mistresses*. And the Reasons are, because you have both a commanding Power over 'em, and also a trust reposed in you that way; it being your Duties, not only to feed, and cloth their Bodies; but to provide things wholsom, and necessary for their Souls too. Parents, and Masters, stand as Priests to their own Families; where they are to perform all the Duties, and Offices of Christian Religion; those only excepted, which are restrain'd to the Publick Ministry, as Preaching, Administration of Sacraments, &c. Though they be yours, yet they stand related to God: he saith you have *born 'em to him*, Ezek. 16. 20. and v. 21. thou hast slain *my Children*. Whence he aggravates the Sin of ill Education, and abuse of 'em from this very Topick, the relation they stood in to him---Thou hast taken thy Sons, and thy Daughters, *whom thou hast born unto me*, and *these* hast thou Sacrificed---*these* hast thou debauched by wicked Opinions, and Prophaness of Life: Or left disposed to every evil way, and work, for want of better Principles. As they are committed to your care; so he will require what you have done with that *Depositum*, as one calls it, which he hath put into your

your hands. Whence *Joshua* undertakes both for himself, and Family, *Chap. 24. 15.* as for me, and my house we will serve the Lord. For which causes, as well as for the Persuasive Arguments from Natural Affections, even *Constantine* the Great, as *Eusebius* relates, *De Vitâ Constant. lib. 4. cap. 51.* not only divided his Empire amongst his three Sons, but took care to enrich 'em with a better Portion, viz. of Divine, and Spiritual things; being a Tutor, and Example to 'em himself, *Θαίσις προάγων μαθήμασι* walking before 'em in the Paths of Virtue, and Religion: and he adds, *διδασκάλους δ' ἐφιστάς, εὐσεβεία δὲ δεικνύμενους ἄνδρας*: He provided 'em the best Masters, and Tutors. You are as Kings, and Priests to 'em, having the Power to Command, Teach, and Excommunicate, those, that are stubborn, and impure; whence both God, and Man require, that at your own Peril, you see those under your Charge, do perform those Duties, that do lye upon themselves. For which cause *David* did resolve *Psal. 101. 7.* that not a wicked man should dwell in his house.

And indeed, they, that do not do so, fall short of that great Duty *Prov. 22. 6.* of training up a Child in the way he should go. And *Eph. 6. 4.* of bringing them up in the nurture, and admonition of the Lord.

Such are worse, than the very Heathen, who sent their Children to *Isocrates*, and others, to be taught Moral Wisdom, which was their Divinity, and fall short of a *Plutarch*, who hath left us a Tract *περὶ παιδων ἀγωγῆς*, about the right Education of Children.

Such leave 'em unable to judge of Doctrines, whether they be of God: and therefore lyable, like the Apostles Children, to be toss'd to, and fro, and carried about with every wind of Doctrine. And this is one reason, as some think, why the Church of Rome loses few, but gains many Profelytes, viz. because she is more careful, than others, to Catechize, and settle Youth in her Faith, and Principles.

Therefore we have here an Ordinance from the most Reverend Fathers of our Church, that commands only an antecedent Duty ; a thing founded on Eternal Reason : on Scripture, and the Laws of the Land. A Duty so plain, and so Natural, to train up Children in Virtue, and all laudible Knowledges, that the very Heathen did Court, and Practise it : and as *Platarch* hath it, παιδεία ἡμῶν ἐν ἡμῶν μόνον ὄντιν ἀθάνατον, καὶ Θεῶν, A good Education out-lives Death, travels beyond the Grave, and abides with us through all the Tracts of Eternal Ages : and therefore being the greatest, and most lasting good, we can do 'em, even common Nature prompts us to it. There can be therefore no objection against the thing it self ; the Matter lies only in reference to that Catechism, injoyn'd by the Church. Which some object against, upon the account, it supposes Children baptized with Sureties ; which they cannot away with. This Point we will fully answer, and then consider the Parts of the Catechism it self.

1. They plead that Sureties undertake more than they can perform ; therefore they can neither make use of them, nor teach a Catechism, which supposes their use.

We Answer,

That the Primitive Christians, whose Faith, and Martyrdoms, were famous in the World ; thought no such Matters : for then Infants had their *Sponsors* or *Susceptores*, and *Susceptrices*, Undertakers, or Sureties ; and because 'twas thought there was a Spiritual Relation arising between the Parents, and Sureties ; therefore the Child called 'em *God-father*, &c. that is, *Father-in-God* ; and the ancient Saxons *Gadsibs*, by corruption *Gossips*, *Sib* signifying *akin*, implying that they were akin, in God. Now these answered, in behalf of the Child, the very same Questions that are used by our Church, viz. *Doeſt thou renounce the Devil, &c. Doeſt thou Believe in God the Father—the Son—the Holy Ghost?*—This was the Universal Practice in the time of *Tertul.* Now those Men, who for a good Conscience, suffered so cruel Persecutions, that

Lactan.

Lactan. de Just. cries out, *Quis Caucasus ! Quæ India !* What place, the most fruitful in Monsters, ever bred such cruel and savage Beasts, as their Persecutors were ! yet never censured this part of Baptism, as a sinful addition, or corruption of this Institution. But because some Men have cheap thoughts of Antiquity, I will consider the thing it self, and argue from the very Nature of it, as,

1. What it is they Undertake, and
2. For how long.

1. They undertake that the Child shall *renounce the Devil, and all his works ; and believe God's Holy Word, and keep his Commandments.* Whence it follows, *Doeſt thou in the Name of this Child renounce the Devil, &c. Doeſt thou believe in God, &c. Wilt thou be Baptized, &c. Wilt thou obediently keep God's Holy Will, and Commandments, &c.* Which is but the first Matter explain'd, and put into the form of Questions. Whence the Child saith in the Catechism, that they did Vow Three things in his Name, *viz.*

1. That he should *renounce the Devil, &c.*
2. That he should *believe the Articles of the Christian Faith.*
3. That he should *keep God's Holy Will, and Commandments, &c.*

The meaning of which is only this, that the Child shall be brought up a Christian, and not a Jew, or Heathen : and that it shall take this Vow, and Profession upon it self. Therefore in the Exhortation to the Sureties after Baptism, the whole Charge is comprised in Two things,

1. That they shall *teach the Child what a solemn Vow, Promise, and Profession, it hath there made by them :* the Matter of which Vow is contain'd in the ingagement above, *viz.* That it shall *renounce the Devil—Believe the Articles of the Christian Faith, and keep the Commands :* as a means to which, they are directed.

2. To Call upon it to bear Sermons, and provide that it may learn the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and Ten Command-

ments: which things, viz. the Creed, Lord's Prayer, and Commandments, do comprise all the Matter of this Promise; To which it is added,

3. That when the Child can say these things, and the Church Catechism (which Catechism I therefore presume the Sureties are obliged to see it learn) they shall bring it to the Bishop to be Confirm'd.

Now here is the whole Matter of Suretiship: which is confessed by those very Men, that Dispute against it. For they sometimes Plead, that the reason of Sureties in the First Ages of Christianity, where there was a mixture of Christians, and Gentiles together, was that there might be a sufficient number ingaged to see the Child brought up a Christian. Therefore, according to them, the bringing up the Child in the Profession of the Gospel, doth comprise the whole burthen of Suretiship.

Then the time this Obligation lyes upon the Sureties, is,

2. Till the Child be of Age to take it upon it self; as in the Publick Baptism: which is at Confirmation, as anon.

We will now see how, and when, the Child takes this Vow from his Sureties upon himself; and that is,

1. At the very learning of these things, for he declares in the Catechism, that he looks upon himself bound to believe, and do, as they have Promised for him; and ingages, that by God's help he will do so: And

2. At Confirmation, where the Bishop asks the Children, and that in order to Confirmation, Do you here in the Presence of God, and of this Congregation, renew the solemn Promise, and Vow, that was made in your Name at your Baptism; ratifying, and confirming the same in your own Persons; and acknowledging your selves bound to believe, and to do, all those things, which your God-fathers, and God-mothers, then undertook for you? To which the answer is, I do.

It is evident then, that all that charge, which the Church laid upon the Sureties at the Child's Baptism; the Church takes

takes off from the same Sureties at the Child's Confirmation. And because Confirmation of the Child is a discharge of the Sureties ; it follows, that the fitting this Child for, and the bringing him to Confirmation, doth comprise the whole Duty of Sureties. And the Rubrick at the end of the Catechism tells us, that the Child shall be confirm'd, when it can say *the Creed, Lord's Prayer, and Ten Commandments, and answer the other Questions in that Catechism* : which is adæquate to the Charge given. *Ergo* the teaching the Child those things, and the bringing him duely to Confirmation, is a Plenary and total Discharge of the Sureties.

But it will be farther objected, that the Sureties ingage, and the Catechism doth express it, that the Child shall keep the *Commandments, and walk in the same all the days of its life*. *Ergo* the Obligation seems to lye on the Surety so long as the Child doth live.

We answer, That that Clause respects the Nature of the Baptismal Vow ; the Covenant the Child makes with God by its Sureties at Baptism ; and by it self at Confirmation ; but doth not respect the ingagement of the Surety any farther, than that the Child shall take this Vow upon it self ; whereof this of Perseverance is a part.

But in case the Child be incapable, or will not learn ; or is not suffered by Parents, Guardians, or Masters ; or that Providence removes the Parties so far asunder, that there is no means, or opportunity left, of performing such ingagements ; the will is accepted for the deed : for God requires no more of any man than what he is able to do : But where Men have any reasonable prospect of such Impediments, they ought not to ingage : but an honest ingagement is not made Sin by an accidental impossibility of Performance. But if Parents shall, as in Duty bound, do this of themselves, the Sureties have no more upon 'em, but to see that the thing be done.

2. It is objected, That Heathenism still abounding in the Christian World, the Church required Sureties, lest one, or two Persons dying, the Child might fall into Gentile hands, and be brought up as such: But now amongst us Heathenism is rooted out, therefore the reason of the thing ceasing, the thing it self ought to cease too; as it did in that case of abstaining from things Strangled, and from Blood.

We answer,

1. This runs upon a false Supposition, and is no better than a fallacy called *Petitio Principii*; which is a taking for granted what ought to be proved. For the danger of Heathenism was not the only reason of Sureties. For those first Ages of Christianity, did ground it much upon that Text, 1 Pet. 3. 21. where he calls Baptism an *Answer of a good Conscience toward God*. Whence they conjectured, he hinted at Interrogatories, and Responses, in that Office. How truly conjectured is beside my Business to inquire; it is enough to the Objector, that there were other Reasons, than what he assigns.

2. Though the Profession of Heathenism is not found amongst us, yet the Practice of Heathenish Debaucheries doth abound: and this Religious Education of Children was design'd to keep 'em, not so much from the Name, as from the Thing.

3. Suretiship was also design'd as a fence against those Schisms, and Heresies, that perplexed the Church; which things obtain amongst us, perhaps, as much as in those antient Times, and Places, where Suretiship was never scrupled. Therefore the reason of Sureties is as great, as Ever: and consequently may be as profitably, and prudently continued, as at first used.

3. *Object*. Some think it absurd, that the Charge is not given to the Parents; but that others are thrust into their place; and bound to do those Duties, which themselves owe their Children.

Answ. This is a Plea merely from Ignorance; for Parents have an antecedent Charge laid upon 'em both by God, and Nature; which they stand as much bound to perform, as if there had been no Surety at all. Therefore the Church layes the Charge upon others, who had none before: to the end, that they may not exclude, or excuse the Parents, but be joyn'd with them, for the more certain, and easie carrying on of the work. The Parents never matter how many Undertakers the Child hath in Temporal concerns; and that they think otherwise in Spirituals, must be from Ignorance, or a mighty Prepossession, or from too easie, and indifferent thoughts of Religion it self.

This is a very Christian, and charitable Work, to be Guides to the Blind, Teachers to the Simple, and Directors of Poor, and (perhaps) neglected Infants, into the Paths of Truth, and Life. By this means you may turn some to Righteousness; and thereby increase your own Rewards for Ever.

It tends mightily to the interest, and advance of Religion; for did Sureties perform their Vows to God (and it is their Sin, if they do not) we should find it would quickly give a mighty check to the growing madness of the Age.

But in fine, because Suppositions grant nothing, let us suppose there may be still some evil in the having Sureties; yet according to Mr. Baxter's resolution of a like case, that supposed Evil cannot affect the Children, or Parents. For some of the Inhabitants of *Deventre* in *Northamptonshire*, as themselves have confessed to me, inquiring of Mr. Baxter what he thought of the *Cross* in Baptism; or of signing Children with it? He answered, *Baptism is a necessary Duty, and in the Church of England we have all the Essential parts of it: Now, saith he, I bring my Child, as the Law Commands, to be baptiz'd; but if there be any sinful, or unnecessary Additions, without which I cannot have Baptism; those Additions are nothing to me; I desire not them, but simply Baptism; what evil there may be in any Additions, being they are imposed, and not my choice, lyes upon the*

the Church, that Commands, and on the Minister, that uses 'em. Therefore if we consider either the thing it self, or Mr. Baxter's sense, Parents have not a sufficient excuse for refusing to have their Children Catechised, because the Catechism injoyn'd supposes they are baptized by Sureties.

Whence we come to consider the Catechism it self; and I doubt not, but I may speak it, not only short, but easie, most comprehensive, and every way most sufficient to it's end. For,

1. This Catechism teaches the Nature of our Baptismal Vow, and Covenant; which is to *renounce the Devil, and all his works, the Poms, and Vanity of this wicked World; and all the sinful Lusts of the Flesh; to believe all the Articles of the Christian Faith; and to keep God's holy Will, and Commandments all the dayes of our life.* Where the whole Duty of Man is comprised in a few words; and suited to the Capacities of the meanest Learner.

2. It teaches the *Apostles Creed*; whose Antiquity is such, that some have thought it was made by the Apostles themselves; and was call'd *σύμβολον* from *συμβάλλω*, every one of 'em being supposed to cast in his part toward the composing the whole. It is observed from the Greek, and Latin Fathers, that *ᾠδήδωσις Ἀποστόλων*, or *Traditio Apostolorum*, was a Tradition supposed to come from some Apostle: but *ᾠδήδωσις Ἀποστολική*, or *traditio Apostolica*, was only a very ancient Tradition; which came, if not from some Apostle, yet from some other near those Times. Now this hath been usually called the *Creed of the Apostles*; and so Dr. D. in his Greek Version of our Liturgy, calls it *τῆς Ἀποστόλων σύμβολον* but whether with respect to this Observation, I cannot say; or how Universally true it may be, is not to be determined by any, that have not made their Observations in numerous instances of this kind. The least we can make of it is (and no man will go to prove any more) that it is a very ancient one, else, we may presume, it had never been placed by any in the Apostles times;

times ; we can trace it very far ; and find it Universally used in the first Ages of Christianity. It was used by the followers of the *Presbyterian Directory*, and the *Assemblies Catechism* ; nor do I remember any Objection then against it, but in that Article, *viz.* the Descent *into hell* ; which they wish was either altered, or left out. Yet the same Men own that descent *Virtually*, though not *Locally* ; therefore according to them, that Article is true, and wants only an Explication.

Now the Ancient, and Universal use of it, speaks the esteem, it hath ever had in the Christian World : and the excellent choice our Catechism hath made in teaching this, rather than that of *Nice*, or *Athanasius* ; which are longer, and not so suited to every Capacity. And though the Presbyterian Party cavill'd at the Descent *into hell*, yet they used this Creed, rather than the *Nicæan*, whose Antiquity is great, and which speaks of no such Descent at all : which is an Argument of their higher Approbation of the other Parts of it. Here, in the fewest words, and plainest way, are taught the great Mysteries of our Faith : what we are to believe concerning God the Father, who made the World : God the Son, who hath redeemed all Mankind : and God the Holy Ghost, who sanctifies all the elect people of God. Which makes up a short, but yet a most plain, and excellent System of all the *Credenda*, or Matters of pure Faith.

3. It teaches what we are to do, and that from the Decalogue, or *Ten Commandments*, which is the sum, and breviary of all Morality. This is the standing Rule given to the World. The *Lex nata*, as *Cicero* calls it, the Law born with us, and imprinted on the hearts of all Men by Nature, was a Counterpart of this : All the Moral Discourses of *Moses* and the Prophets, were but Comments upon this Text : the Sermon of Christ upon the Mount, and the other practical Parts of the Gospels, and Epistles ; are but an Explication, and a Vindication of this, from the false Glosses of the Pharisees, and the Corruptions of the Gnosticks.

Therefore we have here the sum of all Practical Religion, and as it is divided into two Tables ; so our Catechism gives us the most short, plain, and close Explication of each, under those two Heads, *viz. Our Duty toward God, and our Duty toward our Neighbor*, that can well be comprised in so few words.

4. This Catechism teaches the *Lord's Prayer* ; which was given not only a Pattern for us to Pray by ; but as a Form for us to use. Therefore he taught it the Disciples twice, the first time was *Mat. 6. 9.* And some time after, as *St. Luke* relates, *Chap. 11. 2.* they come to him again, *Master teach us to pray* ; as if they looked upon that short form suited indeed to the Infancy of their Discipleship, but not so fitting, now they were taught farther, and came more near the stature of Men ; but he gives 'em the very same again ; a tacit reproof of their ignorance, and reach after Novels. And if we only suppose he might design it as a form ; he could not well have express'd himself more aptly to that purpose ; for *Mat. 6. 9.* *ὡς περὸύχουσι, sic, vel ita orate, Pray thus*, *viz.* in these very words ; which is better rendered so, than as our Translation doth, *viz. after this manner*, which looks somewhat like a *Geneva* cast, as if it was intended only as a Pattern to form our conceived Prayers by. And *Luk. 11. 2.* when ye Pray, *λέγετε Πάτερ ἡμῶν, &c.* say, *Our Father, &c.* which seems a confining 'em to those very words ; as well as to that matter. Indeed those Men must think very highly of themselves, that look upon that Prayer, which was composed by Christ himself, and given to the Twelve, whom he had chosen, and was training up for the Discipleing all Nations ; to be fit only for Children, if for any ; but to stand much below their own improvements. We do not read, that ever our Saviour made use of any other Prayer himself, unless some short Ejaculation, or particular Petition, suited to a present exigence, as when in his Agony, and bloody Sweat, *If it be possible, let this cup pass from me.* And though there may be many Reasons

sons given, why Publick Service ought to be much longer ; yet our Church uses this very form , in every distinct Part of her Service. Here then Youth is taught a Prayer, short, plain comprehensive, and suited to the Divine Will, being given us by the Son of God, and Captain of our Salvation , who best knew how, and what we ought to pray for ; a Prayer suited to all Persons, Times, and Places ; and therefore given for the use of all Posterities ; which none but *gifted Men*, and Pharisical Spirits, who love much *babbling*, ever yet despised. And this our Catechism doth explain in a few words, and to the Capacities of every Learner ; in the Answer to this Question, *What desirest thou of God in this Prayer ?*

5. We have the Explication of the Nature of a Sacrament, that *it is an outward, and visible sign of an inward, and Spiritual Grace, given to us, &c.* Whence it descends to the two Sacraments severally. And tells you, that the outward, and Visible sign, or form in Baptism, is *Water, wherein the Person is baptiz'd in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost*, and that the inward, and Spiritual grace, is *a death unto Sin, and a new birth unto Righteousness, &c.*

Hence it descends to the Sacrament of the Supper, and tells you, that the outward part, or sign is, *Bread and Wine, &c.* And that the inward part or thing signified is, *the Body, and Blood of Christ, which are verily, and indeed taken, and received by the faithful in the Lord's Supper.* By which the Child is led from the conceits both of Transubstantiation, and Consubstantiation at once. For,

1. It tells you that in the Sacrament, and therefore after *Consecration*, or Blessing, for till then it is not a Sacrament ; there are two distinct Parts, *viz.* the sign, which is Bread, and Wine ; and the thing signified, which is the Body, and Blood of Christ ; therefore the one is not changed into the other ; but remain distinct still ; because the sign, and thing signified, while such, cannot be the same.

2. It saith that this Body, and Blood of Christ *is taken, and received by the faithful*; which is spoke exclusively of all others: but if the Bread, and Wine, was really changed into the Body, and Blood of Christ; or if they did consist together, and remain in, and under the outward Elements; although still distinct; yet this Body, and Blood of Christ, would then be *verily, and indeed*, taken, and received, by every Communicant, and not by the faithful only. *Ergo* according to our Catechism, there is neither Transubstantiation, nor Consubstantiation in this Sacrament.

And in the last Answer, you have a full, and most excellent account of what is required of a worthy Communicant; and that is, *to examine themselves, whether they repent them truly of their former Sins; stedfastly purposing to lead a new life; have a lively faith in God's Mercy through Christ, with a thankful remembrance of his Death; and be in Charity with all men.*

Here then are *Homer's Iliads* in a Nutshell; a little Body, and System of Divinity, that comprises the Substance of mighty Volumes! Here the deepest Points, and most mysterious parts of our Faith, are by easie, and familiar Expressions, brought down to puerile Capacities! Whereas the Assemblies Catechism is longer, and runs upon second Notions, which do themselves suppose some preceding Knowledges, and therefore Children need an Explication of'em; and is burthened with numerous Quotations, which are apt to confound, and tire a young beginner.

This then ought to be prefer'd for its own sake, and excellency; which lyes both in the Matter it contains; and it's suitability, and sufficiency to it's end, if it had not been enjoyn'd by any Ordinance of Man. But since it is so, we have a double Obligation, first from it self, and then from the Authority, that Commands it. Therefore if we refuse, we sin against both at once; and in one Act we are doubly guilty. And certainly Men have the less reason to do so, because this very injunction doth yet leave room for every one to teach another at home.

2. It is required of you, that you receive the *Sacrament of the Lord's Supper*. The Persons under obligation are all above Sixteen, and both the *Canon* and *Rubrick*, say, that they shall receive at least *three times* in the year; whereof *Easter* shall be one. There are several Statutes, that oblige the Subject to this Duty: which Laws the People have made themselves in, and by their Representatives; therefore they can no more complain of the thing, than they can, that they have had Parliaments; or at least such, that have brought 'em under this Obligation.

Nor is this founded merely on Humane Laws, but on a Divine Institution and Command of Heaven; it being the last Precept our Saviour gave his Disciples, before he was made an offering for Sin; *Do this in remembrance of me*. Therefore the observance of it must be a means to Salvation, else he lays a needless burthen upon us: and if Nature doth nothing in vain, we cannot imagine that the God of Nature should give us Laws to no purpose. If men may be safe under the customary neglect of this Sacrament, why not of the other? And if of these, why not of any other Rules, and Precepts of the Gospel, since they all come with a Divine Authority impress'd upon 'em? They are *his* Laws, one as well as another.

But some may plead from the Nature of the things themselves; that the Matter of some Commands is intrinsically good, and necessary; and therefore was a Duty even antecedent to a Divine Precept: but this is a pure Positive, that hath no goodness in it self; and therefore had not been a Duty, unless injoyn'd; and consequently though they are all Commanded, yet they are not all alike obliging: because the one hath a double Obligation, *viz.* both from it's own Nature, and Precept too; the other from Precept only.

We answer, that some will not allow the two Sacraments to be purely Positive, but that they are founded partly on Nature, and Reason. But suppose 'em such, and I cannot see the advantage, they can make of it. For pure Positives under
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the Law, such as was Circumcision were as severely punished, as Transgressions in things morally Good, and Evil. For he, that was not Circumcised, was to be *cut off from his People*. And what reason can be given, why the neglect of Positives under the Gospel should not be severely punished, as well as under the Law? Why the neglect, or contempt of Baptism should not be a Sin now, as well as that of Circumcision was then? And this of the Sacrament, as well as that of the Passover? The Author to the *Hebrews* doth argue it to our advantage, *Chap, 2. 2, 3. If the word spoken by Angels was stedfast, and every Transgression receiv'd a just recompence of reward; how shall we escape, if we neglect so great Salvation, which—was spoken to us by the Lord—?* As the Son of God is greater, than a Created Spirit, so the Transgression of the Law given by him, is a greater Sin, than a Transgression of the Law given by the other, and if it be so as to the whole, it must be so as to the like parts of each Dispensation. Therefore a man hath but little cause to hope he may safely neglect a Positive institution of Christ, when a like neglect was so severely punished under the Law. There is a contempt of Divine Authority in the neglect of a Positive, as well as there is of a Moral Duty: and every Contempt, and Disobedience must have a due recompence of reward.

This is the nearest Communion, we have with God in this World; therefore the neglect of it, is the greatest neglect of God himself. It is a means of conveying Grace, and Life to the Soul; which is strengthened, and refreshed by the Body, and Blood of Christ, as the Body is by the Bread, and Wine: and a contempt of the means, is a contempt of the thing it self. For which reasons, as well as others, the Duty is great, and indispensable.

But I presume few of us here are against the Duty it self, so much as against the *Modus* of it, according to the Use of the Church of *England*. Therefore I shall answer the most Common, and material Objections, I have met with; that
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by giving reasonable, and satisfactory answers to them, I may leave every wilful neglect without excuse. And some object,

1. Against the Posture we receive it in, which is *Kneeling*: against which they plead,

1. That it is not agreeable to that Posture, which the Disciples received it in.

To which we answer,

That no Pretenders to Christianity in these Parts of the World do receive it in that Posture, that the Disciples did; which was not sitting, but rather lying. The same men plead, that they received it in a Table gesture, which to them was such; but to us is sitting: therefore, say they, we agree with 'em in a Table gesture, though not in the same Posture of Body: which is nearer to 'em, than the Church of *England* goes.

We argue,

1. That no reason can be given, why a Table gesture, which is different according to different places; should be obliging, and not the very Posture, it was then given in. There is no Precept, nor Example for choosing the one, rather than the other. Therefore this is merely Election, and not done upon any sufficient warrant.

2. Here were many Circumstances considerable, as the gesture, *lying*; the *Persons*, to whom, which were *Men only*; the *number*, but *twelve*; the *time*, at *Night*, and that *after Supper*. Now if we must observe one Circumstance, why not the rest? It is perfectly humourfom to make one obliging, and not another; when the Scripture leaves all alike.

2. It is pleaded, that *Kneeling* seems an Adoration, either of the Table, we kneel before, or of the Bread, and Wine.

1. Adoration of the Table was a thing never used in the Christian Church. There are some indeed, that have bowed toward the East, and therefore toward the Table, because it stands in the East end of the Church; but the reason of this was,

was, not because the Table stood there, but because they expected our Saviour should, at the last day; appear first in that part of Heaven: from that saying, *Mat. 24. 27. As the lightning comes out of the East, and shines even to the West: so shall the coming of the Son of man be.* For the same reason they turn'd toward the East at the rehearsal of the Creed; and from thence we bury our Dead with their Faces that way.

2. Others have bowed this way, because as the Jewish Temple had it's *Holy of Holies*; so they reckon a Divine Presence in this, above what there is in other parts of the Church. For though every part hath the same Consecration, and the whole is the House of God; yet this, say they, is as the highest Room, and the Presence Chamber; here the Christian Sacrifice is offered; here the King comes down to see his Guests; and is graciously present with every Communicant above what he is in other places; in regard of the intimate, and extraordinary Communications of himself. Those, that have made it *motivum cultus*, have ever denied, that they make it *terminativum*. All Christian Professors would ever have look'd upon it to be as vile, and unjust an imputation, as those did, who were accused to worship an Asses Head; or to kill a Child, and eat his Flesh, and drink his Blood.

We are all Commanded to a Publick Worship, and are here determin'd to such, and such parts of the Church: and Kneeling is the very Posture of Prayer, which therefore all, without lawful impediment, ought to use: whence it may as well be said, that they worship the part of the Seat they Kneel before, as that they Worship the Table, who Kneel about it at the Sacrament.

This is such a surprizing Objection, that the Church, which hath been careful to remove every scruple, never speaks to; as not dreaming any would be so vain in their Imaginations, as to make such an Objection. And indeed I must look upon it, not so much a real scruple, as a malicious slander of the Order of our Church.

2. Some think *Kneeling* an adoration of the Sacrament of Bread or Wine.

Indeed the worshipping the Bread is practised in the Church of *Rome*; therefore our Church expecting some scruple this way, doth declare at the end of the Communion, " That "*Kneeling* is injoynd, for a signification of our humble, and " grateful acknowledgments of the Benefits of Christ, therein " given to all worthy Receivers----; no adoration is intended, " or ought to be done; either to the Sacramental Bread, and " Wine, there bodily received; or to any corporal presence of " Christ's Natural Flesh, and Blood. For the Sacramental " Bread, and Wine, remain still in their Natural Substances, " and therefore may not be adored; (for that were Idolatry, " to be abhor'd of all faithful Christians) and the Natural " Body, and Blood of our Saviour Christ are in Heaven, and " not here; it being against the truth of Christ's Natural Body " to be at one time in more places, than one.

This is so plain, and rational, that where it cannot please, certainly nothing can. I am confident, few that make this Objection, know of this Declaration; I have that Charity as to believe, did Men well study what the Church enjoyns, and her Reasons, and Motives why, they would be asham'd of their own scruples.

2. *Obj.* Some are against the Administration of it by a set Form of Prayer: for Christ *Blessed the Bread*, &c. but the form of Blessing is not set down; *Ergo* he never intended it should be given by set forms; but that all should be left to their own conceptions, in imitation of him.

We answer;

That had he repeated the Sacrament, he might, perhaps, have used the same form again. For he, that gave a form to his Disciples, and that twice; and did himself Pray the same words three times in the same day, *Mat.* 26. 39. 42, 44. cannot in reason be supposed to be against a form in the Sacrament. If what Christ hath not done in this case be so obliging, what

he hath done in the like case must be much more obliging : because there is a fairer Expression of his Will in this, than can be supposed in that : therefore if, because Christ hath not given us a form for the Sacrament, the Church may not appoint one ; it must needs be, that since he hath given us a General Form, and indeed a *Common Prayer*, suited to all Times, Persons, and Places, that therefore we may use no other. Therefore while they argue against a Form, they do but put us in a way to establish that most perfect Form, Christ hath taught us, to the exclusion of all other. Some private Teachers have, at this very Sacrament, as well as at Baptism ; used the same Prayer, without any material Alterations ; of which some instances may be given ; now this, though of their own making, is as much a Form, as that appointed by the Church : yet these Men never judge this unlawful ; why then should they judge the other so ? Unless because enjoined, which brings the dispute to another Question, *viz.* from *Forms* to the *injunction* of 'em. Even Presbyterian Writers, as *Calvin*, *Jenkins*, &c. tell us, that where there is the *Word taught*, or (as some) *sound Doctrine*, and *Administration of the Sacraments* ; there is a true Church : *Ergo*, according to them, the manner of *Blessing* is not material to the being of a Church. The truth is, Christ hath given us the Substance, but hath left the *Circumstances* to the Church, as *when*, *how*, &c. and for several Reasons the Church thought fit to appoint very early Forms ; and *Luther* tells us, that they of the Reformation still retain'd the *Publick Prayers* ; and *Administration of the Lord's Supper*. He speaks this by way of Purgation, and saith that their Church is falsely accused, in that it is said, she hath abolished the *Missa*. This is one difference he makes between themselves, and that Spirit of Phanaticism, which he elsewhere saith is crept into the World ; that delights in corners, &c. And such was the sense of the *Augustane Confession* presented to the Emperor *Charles* the Fifth, by the Duke of *Saxony* in the Name of the Protestant Princes, &c. of *Germany*. Therefore these

these Men do reproach, and condemn not only the first Reformers from Popery beyond the Seas; whom they pretend to admire, and call the *Lights of the World*: But our Reformers, and that Reformation too; which even themselves are apt to speak the greatest Mercy, that God hath done to his Church in these Nations. And indeed such scruples serve only to evidence to what Unreasonable excesses a wild, and roving spirit is apt to run Men; and how destructive a lawless Liberty is to all Religion, and Government in the World. And if any Form for the Communion be allowed, there can be no Objection against that appointed by our Church; for however some Parts of our Liturgy be cavill'd at, this hath escap'd as free as any. For those Men, who put in their Objections against the Common Prayer to the Convocation called by His Majesty, *An. Dom. 1662.* had nothing material in this Service to fix upon: but that they may say something, they plead a little impropriety of speech in the Prayer after Receiving, *viz. may I be fulfill'd with thy Heavenly Grace.* Which is but a composition signifying satisfactory measures of Divine Blessings; a being *filled full* with thy Heavenly grace. While Mr. Baxter himself hath acknowledged, that he hath sometimes heard such *Extempore* Prayers from his *Non-Conforming Brethren*, that no wise man could say, *Amen* to 'em.

3. *Object.* Is *mixt Communions.*

To which we plead; that our Saviour, who knew the hearts of all men, gave the Sacrament to *Judas*, even after he had Covenanted to betray him. For, *Luke 22. 14.* he sat down with the Twelve, of which number *Judas* was one: *V. 19. 20.* he institutes, and gives this Sacrament; which done, he saith *V. 21. The hand of him, that betrays me, is with me on the Table:* Therefore *Judas* was present, when it was given; and consequently did receive with the rest, unless excluded, or suspended by our Lord; which cannot be supposed, because,

1. There is no mention of any such thing, and we ought not to presume beyond what the Text may seem to bear. And,

2. When our Saviour said, that one of them should betray him; *V. 21.* they are surpriz'd, and inquire, *Master is it I?* But such an Exclusion, and such a Declaration immediately upon it, would have given 'em a just suspicion, who it was.

The Condition of the Church in this World is *mixt*, and therefore is compared to a *field of wheat full of tares*; which Argument *Calvin* speaks largely to in his Institutions against the *Anabaptists*, and *Novatians*. It is contrary to that Right, which Baptism gives to every Person, till suspended by the Minister, or excluded by the Church. Therefore though the impure *Corinthian* was meritoriously Excommunicate upon the commission of the Fact; yet he was not legally shut out, till it was made the Act of the Church: till which time, he had a Right still to come. For which reason *St. Paul* was so pressing to that Church, to *purge out that leaven*. And in the interim we do not find any Precept, or Example, of a Separation from the Communion of that Church, because that Person was not yet shut out. Nor from the Church of *Galatia*, where there was such a defection to *Mosaick Rites*, that *St. Paul* saith, *I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labor in vain*. None from *Laodicæa*, or *Thyatira*. And therefore what Texts soever they found this Opinion on are abused: for we must not expound any place contrary to the Practice of Christ, his Apostles, and the Churches of God.

These Men make themselves more pure, than Christ himself; and greater Precisians than the very Apostles. It is a most Pharisaical Doctrine, that saith to others, like the Hypocrite in the Prophet, *stand off, for I am Holier than thou*. The wickedness of this conceit will appear from hence, *viz.*

1. That it adds to the Commands of God; for which cause *Calvin* saith, that these Men are *rigidiores multò quàm Paulus*, much more severe, than *Paul* himself, who bids every one to examine himself, but not others.

2. It puts men upon Uncharitable censures, and judging of other men; contrary to the Command of Christ, *Judge not that*

that ye be not judged ; and contrary to the Apostle, *Rom. 14. 4.* and *James 4. 12.* *Who art thou, that judgest another ?*

3. It supposes another man's Sin, which I have no way incouraged, or been, in any point, a partaker of ; may pollute the Ordinance to me, though duely prepared my self ; contrary to the Apostles Doctrine, *Tit. 1. 15.* *to the pure every thing is pure.*

4. This Doctrine doth unavoidably destroy the Churches Unity, Order, and Peace ; for we can never joyn with any Church in the World, but we shall find *mixt Communions* : and therefore must be always shifting, forming, and gathering of new Churches. And that cannot be a Duty, which puts men upon the breach of those Undeniable, and indispensable ones, viz. *Charity, Unity, Order, and Peace.*

This is a fit Opinion to make men *Seekers* ; but such as shall never find. Therefore *Calvin* saith, *Inst. l. 4. cap. 1.* that men do in vain seek a Church *nullo nævo inspersam*, that hath no blemish, and mixture in it. And if any pollute this Ordinance, I should think it is these very men, who are so uncharitable, proud, and censorious, which are the Sins of the Devils ; and stand as directly opposite to the Nature, and designs of the Gospel, as the grossest lusts of the Flesh.

Calvin saith, *Institut. l. 4. cap. 1.* he hath no excuse, *qui externam Ecclesiæ communionem deserit : ubi Dei verbum prædicatur, & Sacramenta administrantur*, who forsakes the external Communion of that Church, where the Word is Preached, and the Sacraments administred. Elsewhere he saith, such are *Phrenetici Spiritus*, mad hot-headed People. *And tanti Ecclesiæ suæ Communionem facit Dominus, &c.* the Lord so highly esteems the Communion of his Church, that he reckons those Renegado's, and Desertors of their Religion, whoever shall alienate themselves from any Christian Society, which hath the Ministry of the Word, and Sacraments. And *Poterit vel in Doctrinæ, vel in Sacramentorum administratione---Vitii quidpiam obrepere, quod alienare nos ab ejus Communionem non debeat.* Every
Error

Error in the administration of the Word, and Sacraments, is not a sufficient cause of Separation. *Luther* on the Epistle to the *Galatians*, saith they are *Apostles of Men*, but never sent by God, who creep into corners, and do not enter into the Publick Church. According to whom, separation upon any of these Pleas is an evidence of a wild, and Fanatick Spirit. Mr. *Calamy* himself at last saw the endless Confusions, which Pharisaical Spirits, that think no Church pure enough for 'em, began to lead men to; and therefore about the middle of the Epistle to the *Godly man's Ark*, endeavours to check this growing Mischief; "Take heed of separating from the Publick Assemblies of the Saints. I have found by Experience, that all our Church Calamities have sprung from this root; He, that separates from the Publick Worship, is like a man tumbling down an hill, and never leaving, till he comes to the bottom of it. I could relate many sad Stories of Persons professing Godliness; who out of dislike to Church-Meetings, began at first to separate from 'em: and after many changes, and alterations, are turned some of 'em Anabaptists, some Quakers, some Ranters, some direct Atheists. But I forbear, you must hold Communion with all those Churches, with which Christ holds Communion: you must separate from the Sins of Christians, but not from the Ordinances of Christ. Take heed of unchurching the Churches of Christ, lest you prove Schismatics, instead of being true Christians.

When men once have an itch after Novelties, under the notion of Reformation; every one is finding fault with what others do, till at last they can find no Church, or Communion pure enough for 'em; because not suited in all Points to their own humors. Therefore Mr. *Calamy* in the next Page doth wish us to avoid, as *Soul-Poyson*, all Doctrines, which

1. Tend to *Liberty*,—
2. Which hold forth a superstitious strictness, above what is required in the Word.
3. Which are Antimagistratical, and Antiministerial.

But

But such is this Doctrine of refusing the Sacrament on pretence of *mixt Communions* ; and therefore, according to Mr. *Calamy*, ought to be avoided as *Soul-Poyson*. We need no other Arguments against a Separation from our Church, than the Writings, and Practices of the first Reformers from Popery both beyond the Seas ; and in this Nation. The Puritans against the Congregational way ; and (which differs in terms only) the late Presbyterians against the Independents.

4. *Object*. is against *Compulsion*, especially from the Civil Magistrate.

This is no more than *Hezekiah* did in the case of the Passover, which answered to this Sacrament. For 2 *Chron.* 30. 5. *Proclamation was made from Bersheba to Dan ; that they should come, and keep the Passover* : which was occasion'd by the neglect of it, as now amongst us : and this stands recorded to the praise of this Pious King. Now the Gospel doth not lessen the Power, or the care of Kings over their Subjects. Christ, and his Apostles, never tampered with the Civil Government. Religion then never strip'd the Crown of Prerogatives under Pretence of the Peoples Privileges. Therefore Kings may Command as much now, as then. Whence Mr. *Baxter* himself doth grant, that the *King may Command the Subject to his Duty*. Else certainly he may Command nothing at all. And in his *Apol.* That the *Kings Laws bind the Conscience, to a Conscionable Performance of all his lawful Commands* : And therefore to this Duty of the Sacrament in particular, this being a lawful Command, because commanded by Christ himself. But let it be on all sides supposed a Duty, yet still we have two Objections remaining ; as,

1. *They are not prepared.*

We Answer,

There may be a Proximate, and accidental unmeetness even in good Men ; for some emergent occasions, some suddain surprize, &c. may discompose, and disorder the Soul : at which time we do not censure a forbearance : But an habitual

unmeet-

unmeetness is inexcusable. God, and the King, exact this Duty of you, and if from one Sacrament, and Year to another; you still cry, you are unprepared; the Sin is your own. Your neglects cannot null a Duty, and take off the Obligation of a Law. Should they wait, till you say, you are ready, that day, I believe, would never come.

Doest thou really think, thou art unprepared, and yet makest no Conscience of preparing thy self? This implies the giving up of thy self, as lost for ever. For if thou art unmeet for this Ordinance, thou art unmeet for the Fellowship of the Saints: if unmeet to eat, and drink in his Presence, before thou art unmeet for the Beatifick Vision. For he, that is not qualified for a remoter, cannot be qualified for a more intimate Communion.

This brings thee into a necessity of Sin; for he, that is idely unprepared; sins if he eats; and sins, if he lets it alone; for the one is an abuse, the other a contempt of this Ordinance.

Canst thou plead, thou art unprepared to send thy Children, and Servants, to be Catechised? yet observe it, the same Men, that neglect the one, do neglect the other. Which gives me to presume, that this is but a Pretence, not a real Cause: and that thou think'st thy self not so much unmeet for the Ordinance, as the Ordinance unmeet for thy self. Let men comply with their Duty in all things, but this; and then I shall have some Charity for such a Plea.

2. *Object.* If it be never so much a Duty in it self, yet it is not so to them; because their Consciences are not satisfied, and *whatever is not of Faith is Sin.*

Answ. If it be thy Conscience, it is such an one, as brings thee into a Necessity of Sin. For if thou eatest, thou sinnest against thy self: if thou eatest not, thou sinnest against God, and the King. Now God never brings any man into a Necessity of Sin: therefore this is not a Conscience according to Godliness, as some speak, but an Erroneous one. Therefore such men ought to use all the means of Information, that they may come without prejudice to this Duty. And in the mean
time

time must be content to suffer. For they must not think, ~~their~~ Dissatisfactions may supersede the Laws. For if so, all Laws would be made useless; and no man would suffer for any thing, which they please to plead Conscience for.

It is but few years, since the Parliament, by way of *Test* imposed the Sacrament, &c. upon all Persons in Places of Trust, or Profit; which Act is still in force, and was promoted especially by the late Lord *Shaf*—and Presbyterian Party; under Pretence of discovering, and removing Papists. But not a man then cried out of *Compulsion*, and *Impositions on the Consciences of Men*; nor were any excused from these Pleas, that they are not prepared; or that it is against their Consciences. Whence they lay that upon others, which they reckon a grievance themselves. And would not be done by, as themselves do to others. Down from late Representatives, to Magistrates, and Common Councils, even to the Petty Offices, and Places of the Kingdom, I have scarce yet met with a man, but what, for the gaining his Point, could allow of an *Occasional Communion*; but when there is nothing but plain Duty in the case, we have noise about *Compulsion*, and *Tender Consciences*; are clog'd with Cases, and Scruples; and hear nothing *but touch not, taste not, handle not*. Which renders the sincerity of this Plea much suspected. And because some will never be wrought upon, we come,

2. To what is required of the *Church-wardens*; and that is, to Present *such as obstinately refuse*. They are sworn to do the Duties of Church-wardens; which Duties are contain'd in the Book of Articles to that purpose; where the Presenting such is expressly required. No man will presume that the Fathers of our Church will exact that of you, which is not your undoubted Duties: and was it put upon issue, whether this be so or not; no man will doubt, which way the tryal would go.

Church-wardens are the Guardians of the Church; whose Obligations reach not only to the *Utensils* of it; but to Loiterers, and Disturbers of the Congregation; to all Contemners,

and Depravers of the Liturgie: to all obstinate Neglecters of Publick Prayers, Catechising, and Sacraments, &c. Whence they are call'd the *Bishops Eyes*; by whom he sees the State, and Condition of every Parish within his Jurisdiction, all which they are Sworn to do; they have given their Faith; and the Oath of God is upon 'em: and how they may satisfie their Consciences without performing the Matter of that Oath, needs a good Casuist to tell us. In this case Pity, and Charity to others, is the greatest Cruelty, and Injustice to your selves. Such Favors are downright Perjuries. And there is no man, that desires you to commit this Sin for his sake, that would willingly bear the Punishment of it in your stead.

3. It is requir'd of us, that, in case of failure; we should Present the Church-wardens and *such as obstinately refuse* at once. The Law saith, they *shall*, but we *may* Present: we have the Power, but they the Necessity. Yet how far the Duty of *obeying every Ordinance of Man*; and the *Oath of Canonical Obedience*, may oblige us in this particular: and how far the word [obstinate] is to be taken, seems worthy our Considerations. And because that term [obstinate] seems a limitation restraining this Duty of Presenting to some Neglecters only; that we shall present, not all, but *such*; I purpose in a day, or two; to present every Family in both Parishes with a Copy of these Discourses; that they may peruse, and weigh 'em at leisure: whereupon I hope that all under Obligation will either receive this *Easter*, or give me the reasons of their delays; that we may be able to judge whether they be *Obstinate*, or not; and be capable of shewing our selves both Sober, and Honest.

The Punishment then of *obstinate* refusals is *Excommunication*, which some men do incourage themselves to the hazard, and contempt of, by pleading,

1. That it was not used anciently, as now, upon light Causes, as differences in the mere Circumstantials of Religion:

We

We answer: Differences may be little in themselves, but if they lead to Separation, they are not to be accounted *little*; because they then destroy *Unity, Charity, and Peace*. Therefore it was decreed of old, that if any keep Separate Meetings, the Presbyter shall be deposed; and the People Excommunicate: and there be instances of several, that have suffered accordingly. The Infancy, and Persecutions of the Church, not only hindered her Order, and good Government; but kept many things practised in those times from our knowledge. If there is uncertainty as to the Succession of Bishops, and that in the most famous Churches then in the World, as *Rome, Jerusalem, Antioch, and Alexandria*; we must not expect an account of all the Uses, and Reasons of Excommunication in those times. What notices we have are sufficient, though there was much more done, than recorded. Nor is this Punishment beyond the Merits of the Cause; For Schism is directly contrary to the Nature, and designs of the Gospel, which is to Unite us in one Body, to bring us into one Sheepfold, &c. And hath a more direct, and immediate tendency, to the Confusion, and Ruine of Church, and State, than Lusts of the Flesh have.

2. They plead, that as Excommunication is called a *delivering to Satan*, so such Persons were tormented in Body, or Mind, or both; but now we see no such things, whence, say they, it is not regular, or not done upon due, and sufficient Causes among us.

We answer, That Miracles were wrought for the more powerful Conviction of the Gentiles; and the more the Gospel obtain'd, the less frequent they grew; till they ceased in the Third Century, unless in some rare instances: So those sensible Evidences of Divine displeasure upon Excommunicate Persons were extraordinary, and design'd only to make Excommunication terrible to all Ages of the Christian World, and therefore after some instances ceased too. Now men may as well argue against the Gospel it self, because not backed by Miracles still; as against the Validity of Excommunication, because not fol-

lowed now by such dreadful Visitations, as before. *Korah, &c.* for Schism, and Rebellion, went down alive into the Pit; they, that offered strange fire were consum'd by fire from Heaven: those, that tempted God in the Wilderness were destroyed of the destroyer, &c. which things were writ for our Admonition, 1 *Cor.* 10. that we might learn to avoid those Sins, against which God had so declared his wrath from Heaven. But after-Ages finding no such Judgments on such Offenders, may as well conclude these Sins differ in Causes, and Circumstances, and are not the same in Guilt, though in Fact; as that Excommunication is not valid, and regular, because Persons are not buffeted by Satan, as soon as cast out of the Church.

2. They plead, That in after-ages, Excommunication had powerful Effects on the Minds and Consciences of Men: in either bringing 'em by Repentance into the arms of the Church, or by leaving 'em under a reprobate sense; but now no such things. *Ergo*——To which for brevity only thus;

1. Those times were many Ages nearer the Apostles, whence those instances of Wrath upon Excommunicate Persons were more fresh, and warm amongst 'em, and therefore made more deep impressions upon the Minds of Men, than now.

2. The causes of Excommunication then were Three, *viz.*

1. Practical Immoralities.

2. Falling to Gentilism; in Sacrificing to Idols, and delivering up their Bible in time of Persecution; for which they were called *Traditores*, and were hardly received into the Church.

3. The falling away to Schismatical, and Heretical Congregations; as appears from Apostolical Canons, Councils, and the Practice of the Church.

Now the two first sorts, being Excommunicate, had no Church to fly to; nothing under which they could shelter, and maintain their hopes of Heaven. And therefore they were easily convinced, and perswaded to return. But now generally Men do first leave the Church, before the Church doth cast 'em out: they become usually Members of Separate Congregations, where

where they promise themselves a more certain way to Heaven; than amongst us; and therefore neither matter Excommunication, before it comes; nor are capable of seeing their Dangers, when under it. The case is like that of the *Publicans*, and *Harlots* on the one hand, and the *Pharisees* on the other: not that I Parallel the Persons so much as the Case; the former had no Religion to palliate their Sins, and create an hope; and therefore were easily convinced, and brought to a Saviour: but the other trusting to their own Religion would never be wrought upon.

Then the third sort, that were Excommunicate for Separation; they stood upon like terms with them amongst us; each were then, and are now, Members of a Congregation, where they expect Salvation: but here lies a difference, in these ancient times all men, that were not of their own Party did avoid 'em; and would hold no Society, and Commerce with 'em, which tended mightily to shame, convince, and reduce 'em. But now even they, that are of the Church, make hardly any difference between Excommunicate Persons, and others; as if the thing were not worthy their Considerations, unless, perhaps, as a Civil, and Politick instrument of Government; while all others look upon 'em as *Confessors*, comfort, and encourage 'em; which naturally tends to the blinding, hardning, and rendering 'em mightily incapable of seeing the Evil, and Dangers; they are under.

Now as to the latter part of the Objection, *viz.*

2. Those, that lay under Excommunication then, were usually given up to a *Reprobate sense*; but now they continue as sober, honest, and well-disposed after, as before it: whence they conclude against the Validity of it as used amongst us, that it binds not in Heaven.

We answer, That by giving up to a *Reprobate sense*, and *hardning the heart*, we understand two things,

1. God's withdrawing his Grace: And,
2. Mens betaking themselves thereupon to those several Evils, they are disposed to.

Some

Some to Debaucheries, and Atheism : others to unlawful Schisms, and Disturbances ; in which many become more blind, hardned, and incorrigible ; more satisfactorily, and immoveably fixed in Delusions, after Excommunication, than before. Which must be imputed to God's departure from them, who depart from his Church, slight her Admonitions, and contemn her Censures. We may find too many instances to prove this, that a man may be under a Reprobate sense, and yet seem Religious to himself, and others ; as many Hereticks did. Therefore these Objections can take off nothing from the Weight, and Power of Excommunication ; but leaves it terrible to every Man, that hath any regard to his Eternal Safety.

We have now one Argument in the Text, to press us to this Submission to every, and therefore to this Ordinance of Man ; viz. *for the Lord's sake* : that is,

1. Because the Lord Commands it : therefore out of Conscience of our Duty to him, we should do it. And,
2. God is the Author, and Defender of all Order, and Government, *Rom. 13. 1. The Powers, that are, be ordain'd of God* : and *V. 4. He is the Minister of God*, therefore we should Submit to him, for his Sake, who hath set him over us. *Fear God, Honor the King*, are inseparable Duties ; he can be no good Christian, who is no good Subject, and no good Churchman.

F I N I S.

